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# Tax Reforms has Simplified Filing for Some, but Some Pitfalls Still Common, According to UD Law Professor; Tax Filers May Procrastinate to Avoid the Unknown, to Spite Government, According to Director of UD Counseling Center

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# featuring UD

Story ideas for print and broadcast media

April 10, 1990

## **TAX REFORM HAS SIMPLIFIED FILING FOR SOME, BUT SOME PITFALLS STILL COMMON, ACCORDING TO UD LAW PROFESSOR**

Even after tax reform, filing returns is still a complicated process, according to Dale Searcy, University of Dayton law professor and director of UD's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, which provides free assistance to more than 1,500 local taxpayers each year.

"Tax reform has made life simpler for some taxpayers because it has increased the standard deduction, and thus has reduced the number of people who itemize their deductions. But taxpayers close to the limit for itemizing still need to go through a complete list of their deductions," Searcy said.

A common problem is that "most people don't realize that when a husband and wife have incomes even somewhat similar in amount, it is sometimes simpler to file separately than jointly. Ten years ago, 99 percent of the time it was easier to file jointly. Now about one third of the time, married couples can save on taxes by filing separate returns." He explained that couples must file the same way, either jointly or separately, at both the state and national levels. But in Ohio filing separately is often much less expensive than filing jointly, and at the federal level filing separately is often the same or only slightly more expensive. The difference could be a net savings.

For interviews, contact Dale Searcy at (513) 229-2323 or 298-7453.

Law students in the VITA program will prepare tax returns for local residents who cannot afford professional help through Monday, April 16, in the basement of Albert Emanuel Hall, located on the southeast corner of Alberta and K Streets. Hours are 5:30-7 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 10 a.m. to noon Saturday. The clinic is closed on Friday. For more information, call the VITA recorded message at (513) 229-3802.

## **TAX FILERS MAY PROCRASTINATE TO AVOID THE UNKNOWN, TO SPITE GOVERNMENT, ACCORDING TO DIRECTOR OF UD COUNSELING CENTER**

Dislike of taxes in general or fear of the unknown may lead people to delay filing their tax returns, according to Steven Mueller, licensed professional clinical counselor and director of the University of Dayton Counseling Center.

"Psychologically, it's a matter of putting off something that's kind of painful. The fear of the unknown, especially with all the new laws, sometimes overrides the potential reward of getting your \$300 back two or three months earlier. And the whole idea of taxes is often unappealing to people, so they kind of rebel a little bit--a 'You're not getting my money until the very last moment' kind of thing," said Mueller.

For interviews, contact Steven Mueller at (513) 229-3141 or 299-8035.



*The University of Dayton*

For further information or assistance in scheduling interviews, contact Office of Public Relations, (513) 229-3241.